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REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated February 21, 2007. Claims 1-58 are pending. The final Office Action indicates that claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16-18, 22, 26-29, 33-35 and 40-52 have been allowed. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 13, 21, 23, 24, 53 and 56 have been amended to clarify the claimed subject matter. Applicant submits that the claim amendments do not introduce new issues or new matter, and therefore request entry of the amendment. Accordingly, claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 19-21, 23-25, 30-32, 36-39 and 53-58 are presented for reconsideration, with claims 1, 3, 9, 13, 15, 19-21, 23, 24, 30, 36 and 53-58 being in independent form.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 13, 15, 19-21, 23-25, 36-38, 53 and 55-58 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being purportedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,618,749 to Saito et al. in view of U.S. Patent 6,043,904 to Nickerson. Claims 11, 30-32, 39 and 54 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being purportedly unpatentable over Saito in view of Nickerson and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,134,501 to Satomi et al.

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 3, 9, 13, 15, 19-21, 23, 24, 30, 36 and 53-58 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application relates to a network facsimile device connected to a network (such as the Internet or a local area network) which employs an electronic mail function and has functions of a facsimile device as well as a function of exchanging image information through said network. In the operating environment of such network facsimile devices, a delivery system can be employed to deliver an additional electronic mail to a sending terminal for confirming the delivery of a first electronic mail communication. Such e-mail is referred to as a delivery

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confirming mail. Delivery confirming mail is created not only when there is successful delivery of an original e-mail to the mail address to which it is to be communicated but also when delivery is unsuccessful.

Applicant devised an improvement whereby a received delivery confirming mail can be transferred to another address. Such an improved approach includes storing a mail address of a destination address to which a confirmation is to be delivered, and at a time of receiving e-mail, determining whether the received e-mail is an electronic confirmation mail. In addition, it is determined whether to transfer the delivery confirmation mail to the stored destination address, in accordance with the contents of the delivery confirmation mail. For example, the delivery confirmation mail may be transferred to the stored destination address, when (i) the delivery confirmation mail indicates successful mail delivery, or (ii) contents relating to a transferring error are not contained in the delivery confirmation mail, or (iii) contents relating to a transferring error are contained in the delivery confirmation mail.

Saito, as understood by Applicant, proposes an Internet facsimile system configured to detect whether (or not) a received e-mail is delivery status notification mail.

Saito, column 6, lines 1-38, which was cited in the Office Action, states as follows:

**The identification that the received data is delivery status notification mail is carried out in delivery status notification mail identification section 32 by the fact that the received data contains the same delivery status notification message stored in delivery status notification message table 38 in RAM 23.**

FIG. 7 is a schematic view of delivery status notification mail in said embodiment. As shown in FIG. 7, the delivery status notification mail consists of the header and body. The body consists of information on the success/failure of communication, the header and the body of the original mail. The image file attached to the body of the original mail is character data.

The delivery status notification mail has the same configuration as that of normal E-mail and it is difficult to judge whether the received data is delivery status notification

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mail or normal E-mail based on the configuration only. Therefore, the transmitting side of delivery status notification mail attaches a delivery status notification message indicating that the data received such as [X-Confirmation:OK] is delivery status notification mail to the header. On the other hand, the IFAX on the receiving side stores the delivery status notification message in delivery status notification message table 39 in RAM 23.

Delivery status notification mail identification section 32 collates this delivery status notification message and if the same message is included in delivery status notification message table 39, it judges that the received data is delivery status notification mail.

Once the received data is identified as delivery status notification mail, specific information extraction section 35 extracts information on the success/failure of delivery and the image information of the original document from the received data. The extracted data is converted to facsimile data by format conversion section 37. The converted facsimile data is edited by data edit section 36 so that it may fit in one page.

Saito, column 8, lines 7-30, which is cited in the Office Action, states as follows:

The IFAX receives E-mail from network interface section 24 and then stores it in data storage 25 (ST1001). Delivery status notification mail recognition section 32 judges whether the received data contains any delivery status notification message or not by collating the received data with the data stored in delivery status notification message table 39 (ST1002). If there is no delivery status notification message, the IFAX judges that the received data is not delivery status notification mail (ST1003) and carries out different processing.

If the received data contains a delivery status notification message, the IFAX judges that the received data is delivery status notification mail and carries out the following processing:

The information on the success/failure of delivery of the received data is converted by format conversion section 37 to facsimile data (ST1004). The image information of the original document converted to a text format, that is, character data is converted by format conversion section 37 to facsimile data (ST1005). The converted information on the success/failure of delivery and part of the image information of the original document is edited on one page (ST1006) and output from facsimile communication unit 28 (ST1007).

Thus, Saito merely proposes parsing the received data to determine whether the received data contains a delivery status notification message, and if it does, the information in the delivery

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status notification message (that is information on the failure/success of transmission) is composed with image information of the original document to form facsimile data for output.

However, Saito does not teach or suggest determining whether the delivery confirmation mail indicates successful mail delivery and transferring the delivery confirmation mail to a stored destination address when the delivery confirmation mail indicates successful mail delivery, as provided by the subject matter of claim 1 of this application. Likewise, Saito does not teach or suggest determining whether the delivery confirmation mail includes contents relating to a transferring error and transferring the electronic delivery confirmation mail to a stored destination address when the contents relating to the transferring error are not contained in the delivery confirmation mail, as provided by the subject matter of claim 3 of the present application.

Nickerson, as understood by Applicant, proposes a facsimile machine configured to send job confirmation to one or more output devices which are remote to the transmission job originating station.

Although Nickerson proposes transmission of confirmation information to an output device which is remote to the transmission job originating station, Nickerson, like Saito, does not teach or suggest determining whether the delivery confirmation mail indicates successful mail delivery and transferring the delivery confirmation mail to a stored destination address when the delivery confirmation mail indicates successful mail delivery, as provided by the subject matter of claim 1 of this application. In addition, Nickerson, like Saito, does not teach or suggest determining whether the delivery confirmation mail includes contents relating to a transferring error and transferring the electronic delivery confirmation mail to a stored destination address

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when the contents relating to the transferring error are not contained in the delivery confirmation mail, as provided by the subject matter of claim 3 of the present application.

Nickerson (column 9, lines 26-33) states that confirmation information provided to a user may not be a confirmation of successful delivery, but may instead include non-confirming information.

Satomi, as understood by Applicant, proposes a facsimile machine configured to register names of remote stations to which facsimile communications are often carried out. Satomi was cited in the Office Action as purportedly proposing preparing an error report on a liquid crystal display only if both a predetermined function key is depressed by the user and a communication error takes place.

Applicant simply does not find teaching or suggestion in the cited art, however, of a network facsimile device, the operations of which includes (i) storing a mail address of a destination address to which a confirmation is to be delivered, (ii) detecting, at a time of receiving electronic mail, whether the received electronic mail is an electronic delivery confirmation mail for confirming mail delivery, (iii) determining whether the delivery confirmation mail indicates successful mail delivery; and (iv) transferring the delivery confirmation mail to a stored destination address when the delivery confirmation mail indicates successful mail delivery, as provided by the subject matter of independent claim 1 of this application.

Independent claims 3, 9, 13, 15, 19-21, 23, 24, 30, 36 and 53-58 are patentably distinct from the cited art for at least similar reasons.

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Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 3, 9, 13, 15, 19- 21, 23, 24, 30, 36 and 53-58 and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited art.


The final Office Action indicates that claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16-18, 22, 26-29, 33-35 and 40-52 are allowed. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance in the final Office Action and submits that the allowed claims recite subject matter which further supports patentability for reasons in addition to those identified in the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance in the final Office Action.

In view of the amendments to the claims and remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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